

Applicant: H. Tadano, et al.  
U.S.S.N.: 09/990,797  
RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION  
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**REMARKS**

Claims 1-19 are pending in the subject application. Claims 1-19 are subject to a restriction requirement and/ or an election of species requirement.

Instead of responding directly to the election requirement, Applicants have amended the pending claims in a manner that Applicants believe obviates the need to make an election. Also, Applicants have amended the claims in a few places for purposes of clarity (e.g., grammatical purposes). In addition, Applicants have added claims 20-24 so as to claims aspects/ embodiments of the present invention.

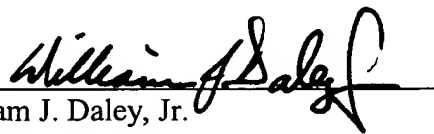
If the Examiner, upon review of the amended claims and the added claims believes that there is a need to impose a restriction/ election of species requirement, then Applicants request the Examiner to contact undersigned so that any such requests can be handled orally.

It is respectfully submitted that the subject application is in a condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is requested.

Because the total number of claims and/or the total number of independent claims post amendment now exceed the highest number previously paid for, a check is enclosed herewith for the required additional fees. However, if for any reason a fee is required, a fee paid is inadequate or credit is owed for any excess fee paid, the Commissioner is hereby authorized and requested to charge Deposit Account No. **04-1105**.

Respectfully submitted,  
EDWARDS & ANGELL, LLP

Date: December 17, 2003

By:   
William J. Daley, Jr.  
(Reg. No. 35,487)  
P.O. Box 9169  
Boston, MA 02209  
(617) 439- 4444

Customer No. 21874  
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